PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL and REVIEW
Policy and Procedures

DEFINITIONS

Terms in this document, for which definitions are not provided in the text or may not be self-evident or for which usage at ACC may differ to that in other higher education institutions are as follows:

Constructive Alignment: Constructive alignment (CA) is an outcomes-based approach to teaching in which the learning outcomes that students are intended to achieve are defined before teaching takes place. Teaching and assessment methods are then designed to best achieve those outcomes and to assess the standard at which they have been achieved.

Material changes: as defined by TEQSA - https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/articles/updated-material-change-notification-policy

Pedagogy: is most commonly understood as an approach to teaching, which focuses on the theory and practice of learning, and how this process influences, and is influenced by, the social, political and psychological development of learners. Pedagogy, taken as an academic discipline, is the study of how knowledge and skills are imparted in an educational context, and it considers the interactions that take place during learning.

Program (or Degree Program): The ACC 4 year Bachelor of Chiropractic Degree.

Unit (or Unit of Study): An element of a subject (as defined above), that has specified student learning outcomes and requires satisfactory performance in assessments that measure student performance regarding learning outcomes.

PURPOSE

The Australian Chiropractic College (ACC) takes full responsibility for all higher education programs it is authorised and accredited to deliver. This policy and associated procedures contribute to ACC's approach for ensuring the consistency of academic standards through specific strategies for robust development, mechanisms for monitoring and ongoing improvement of Programs delivered at the College.

SCOPE

This document applies to all higher education Programs delivered by ACC and accredited by TEQSA. The procedures outlined in this document apply to:

- ACC Staff Members
- Members of ACC's Academic Board and relevant sub-committees
- Members of the Board of Directors

This document does not detail the requirements or processes for the external accreditation of ACC's Programs by professional bodies or associations.

POLICY STATEMENT

The *Course Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedures* have been established to ensure the College's academic governance and fiduciary responsibilities are applied to Program development, approval, review and enhancement processes.

ACC Programs and all Units that form part of any Program will be designed, developed and delivered in line with: the vision and values of the College as set out in the Strategic Plan; the ACC Governance Framework, Quality Assurance Framework and Teaching and Learning Plan; Higher Education Standards and Regulatory requirements; and Professional Accreditation Standards.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Key Principles include but are not limited to:
- Student-centred teaching and learning strategies;
- The alignment of Program Learning Outcomes to the AQF and Graduate Attributes;
- Constructive alignment of Program learning outcomes, Units learning outcomes and Unit assessment modes and content;
- Maximising flexibility in teaching and learning modes to promote student engagement, progression and success;
- External referencing and benchmarking;
- Availability of exit awards through nested programs;
- Relevance to and engagement with the professions;
- Embedding work integrated learning to enhance development of professional knowledge and skills and graduate employment opportunities.

PROCEDURES

In accordance with the ACC's Governance Framework, the following Boards and Committees have particular roles and authorities in the Development, Approval and Review of Programs and Units:
- Board of Directors
- The Academic Board and its subcommittees:
    - Course (i.e. Program) Development Committee (CDC), and
    - Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
- The Program Advisory Committee (PAC)

1.   Development

1.1.   Recommendations that a Program be developed will normally emanate from the Academic Board.

1.2.   Once the Board of Directors have approved that a program be developed, the Academic Board will appoint members to the Course (Program) Development Committee (CDC) to design the curriculum in line with the specifications and parameters approved by the Academic Board. Including the Principles listed above and taking into consideration emerging disciplinary scholarship and practice.

1.3.   Program development will reflect coherent and scaffolded Units, the design of which will cumulatively develop students' specific disciplinary skills and knowledge alongside generic and transferable skills that align with ACC's Graduate Attributes and Program learning outcomes.

1.4. Unit learning outcomes will be mapped to the Program learning outcomes and include an advanced level of knowledge and inquiry set to reflect the appropriate level in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the year of study.

1.5. Each assessment task within each Unit will be designed to develop skills and knowledge at a particular level and will align with and demonstrate Unit learning outcomes.

1.6. CDC members will be suitably qualified and experienced, and the operations of the CDC will be monitored by the Academic Board to ensure strong academic leadership and scrutiny of all aspects of academic quality, including curriculum rationale and design, delivery modes, constructive alignment and Pedagogy.

1.7. Individual discipline areas in each Unit will be underpinned by substantial levels of scholarship, with reference to relevant theoretical frameworks, practice standards, published research and current literature.

1.8. Cross-disciplinary and external referencing, and stakeholder engagement will ensure efficient, effective and contextually relevant Program development by the CDC.

2. Approvals

2.1. The ACC strives to maintain rigorous standards for each accredited Program in line with the Higher Education Standards Framework and the ACC's vision, mission and strategic goals. As such, it utilises peer assessment within Program development, approval and review processes to ensure that students will have every opportunity during their studies to achieve and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

2.2. The CDC will be required to develop all new Unit proposals as part of a coherent Program design process, which has the oversight of the Academic Board. The CDC will regulatory report to the Academic Board throughout the Program development process and present all essential aspects of the Program detail for final approval to the Academic Board.

2.3. The Academic Board considers, scrutinises and approves all ACC Programs ensuring that they meet the specifications of the relevant AQF level, that the curriculum is mapped to the Program learning outcomes, that the Program is coherent and that students will have ready access to current knowledge and engagement in inquiry, consistent with the disciplinary nature and level of the Program. The Academic Board relies on the advice of the CDC and that of other external experts in considering approval.

2.4. All submissions to TEQSA for Program accreditation or renewal of accreditation must be approved by the Academic Board and thereafter the Board of Directors in order that Management may proceed.

2.5. In order to maintain transparency, all proposals for change will be subject to appropriate academic controls for approval, and the detail will be appropriately recorded, in line with the ACC's Governance and Quality Assurance Framework.

2.6. All Units will be required to meet and attain standard reporting obligations and conditions as approved by the Academic Board and the Policies and Procedures set out by the ACC.

3. Program Review Processes

3.1. Regular and Systematic Review is an integral element of the ACC's quality Assurance Framework. It covers Unit content, assessment, delivery modes and teaching and learning practices, as well as whole Program rationale, design and relevance, and is integral to academic quality assurance.

Reviews of Individual Units, of each Program and of each Year of each Program are conducted internally on an Annual basis.

A whole of Program Review is conducted both internally and externally (through independent assessors) on a seven-year cycle, or earlier if deemed necessary.

Annual internal review

3.2. **Annual internal reviews** facilitates:

- The evaluation and continued improvement of Program and Unit learning outcomes;
- The identification of emerging scholarship, or industry and professional accreditation priorities;
- Maintenance of a student-centred focus through the use of student unit evaluation and feedback;
- Identification and addressing of issues that may result from analysis of student performance data; and
- Reassessment of learning and teaching strategies.

3.3. To improve and enhance the student learning experience, information is gathered systematically from a number of sources, including, but not limited to:

- Data collection, including Unit pass/fail rates, program completion rates, student attrition, grade distribution;
- An in-depth SWOT analysis;
- Staff reflection on previous years' feedback and corresponding action items;
- Student grievances, complaints and appeals;
- Reviews of ACC engagement strategies and their associated effectiveness.

3.4. Annual Unit Performance Reports, serve as an integral component of the academic quality assurance process. They are also a significant reference point for developing best practice.

These Reports provide Unit level analysis and information derived from Student Satisfaction Surveys, which include student Unit evaluation, including student evaluation of teaching quality, and also the reflections of academic staff.

3.5. Responses to interim review and assessment processes, including Unit Enhancement Reports and Program Performance Reports, are considered by the Academic Board in consultation with the Academic Dean, with inputs from both the CDC and the LTC.

Independent comprehensive Program Review

3.6. The Independent comprehensive Program Review scheduled on a Seven (7) yearly cycle, and mentioned under 3.1 above, is managed under the direction of the Academic Board.

3.7 The independent reviewers will be credentialed experts with (a) qualifications and experience relevant to the main disciplinary area(s) of the Program, (b) experience in course/program design, development and review in a higher education environment, and (c) expertise in pedagogy and national and global trends in teaching and learning.

3.8 The independent review process will include the following stages:

- The Academic Board will appoint appropriately qualified and credentialed experts to review the Program(s);
- The independent Experts will be provided with all Program materials and a brief to guide their assessment;

- The Experts will review all relevant information, and if required, interview members of governing Boards and their Committees, staff and/or students;
- The Independent Experts provide the Academic Board with a Review Report for each Program;
- The Academic Board will meet to discuss, consider and approve any recommendations arising from the independent review;
- A Quality Improvement Plan, based on the recommendations arising from the review, will be and approved by the Academic Board, and implemented within an agreed timeline and with agreed delegations;
- The Quality Improvement Plan will be overseen by the Academic Board with the delegation of responsibility for progressing implementation of the Plan by the Academic Dean.

3.9 The independent reviewer role focuses on the following:

- Review of the Program structure, design, content and assessment to assess that it meets sector standards and benchmarks, meets the AQF requirements and meets broad regulatory requirements under the Higher Education Standards Framework;
- Review of ACC's approach to academic governance, including means of monitoring and improving the Program;
- Review of student performance data and outcomes;
- Assessment as to whether adequate resourcing is provided, whether staff are suitably qualified and skilled and whether best practice in learning and teaching is facilitated and maintained through staff opportunities for continuing professional development;
- Provide recommendation on the continuation or enhancement of the Program or its individual Units.

3.10 To maintain exceptional higher education standards the College requires relevant benchmarking of the academic performance against other institutions in order to identify, and act upon, highlighted areas requiring alteration or enhancement. All relevant benchmarking activities will be considered by the Academic Board and feed into Program review processes as required.

Approvals Between scheduled whole of Program Reviews

3.11 All material changes to Programs will be approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) following recommendation by the Academic Dean, and submitted thereafter for approval by the Academic Board and endorsement by the Board of Directors. They will also be submitted for noting by the CDC.

3.12. Regarding minor Unit changes, the Academic Dean has the authority to recommend such changes to the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) for approval. Such minor changes will be notified thereafter to the Academic Board and the CDC, but they do not require approval of the CDC or the Academic Board to proceed.

4. **External Professional Accreditation**

4.1. In addition to regulation by TEQSA, and specifically to enable graduates to apply for Professional Registration, external Professional Program accreditation of the ACC Program is required by the Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia (CCEA).

   The ACC Chiropractic Degree is currently undergoing the CCEA accreditation process, which will will be finalised when the first cohort of students has completed the program, and all current and prospective students of the ACC are so advised.

4.2 Program relevant reports received by the ACC from an external accrediting body, including TEQSA and the CCEA, will be reviewed by the Academic Board, which in turn will consult with the CDC and the LTC as appropriate, and advise and/or make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

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